

BOOK REVIEWS

Physiology and Biochemistry of the Skin. By Stephen Rothman. 1954. Pp. 741, 194 illus. University of Chicago Press. (£7 6s. 6d.)

This book was written to present a detailed study of the physiology and biochemistry of the skin, covering not only a major part of the past work on the subject but also presenting new and original theories and offering fresh lines of approach to problems as yet unsolved. Throughout, the text is stimulating and full of interest and there is a particularly valuable and exhaustive bibliography. If there is any criticism to make it is that the book is too comprehensive and that its detailed inclusion of past and sometimes outworn theories may be at the expense perhaps of more recent, although unproven work.

The aim of the work has been admirably achieved and the result is a book which must become a standard work of reference in this specialized subject and a spur to further achievement in the field of basic research in dermatology.

A. J. G.

Atlas of Skin and Venereal Diseases. By W. Frieboes and W. Schoenfeld. 2nd ed. 1955. Pp. 292, 476 illus. G. Thieme, Stuttgart. (DM. 118, £10)

This Atlas is finely produced but is, as books of this kind tend to be, rather expensive. Nearly all of its many illustrations are in colour and they provide a vivid

impression of the lesions depicted; their colours are, as a rule, as correct as the present stage of colour photography permits. Each section of the book is introduced with a short chapter, dealing mainly with differential diagnosis; the pictures are adequately captioned. All the common skin diseases are amply illustrated and so also are many of the less common diseases.

The section on venereal diseases includes altogether 74 illustrations. Primary, secondary, late benign, and congenital syphilis are dealt with in 61 pictures, and there are also two illustrations of the Luotest reaction. In the preface the authors mention the decline in incidence of early and of congenital syphilis. They omit altogether the muco-cutaneous lesions of congenital syphilis—only the late stigmata are shown—but reproduce still a considerable number of pictures showing the pustular, rupial, and ecthymatous exanthems of acquired syphilis. One has the feeling that these pictures are of historical interest only, because these types of rashes seem to have disappeared completely; they had become rare even before the present era. Some of the five complications of gonorrhoea depicted are also of historical interest only (at least one hopes so), *e.g.*, the far advanced stage of ophthalmia and the gangrene of a testicle. Keratoderma blennorrhagica and the skin eruptions which sometimes accompany Reiter's disease are not shown. Six illustrations deal with ulcer molle and lymphogranuloma inguinale and eleven with non-venereal genital lesions.

A. F.